

Councilwoman Bonner Announces Creation of Not-for-Profit 501(c)(3) for Mt. Sinai Harbor Marine Stewardship Center at Cedar Beach

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Farmingville, NY - Councilwoman Jane Bonner has announced that a not-for-profit 501(c)(3) corporation has been certified by the State of New York to generate public awareness, promote, preserve and beautify the Mt. Sinai coastal environment and heritage for future generations. The new corporation, Friends of Mt. Sinai Harbor, Inc. is a Type B corporation pursuant to section 201 of the Not-For-Profit Corporation Law.

The Friends of Mt. Sinai Harbor will focus their efforts on the Mt. Sinai Harbor Marine Stewardship Center at Cedar Beach, which is scheduled to be opened this fall. It is located at the former home of the Mt. Sinai Nature Center which has been closed for nearly two years in order to complete renovations to the facility. The new center will house marine-based displays and provide marine stewardship learning opportunities for residents, schools and private organizations with a focus on the Long Island Sound. Among the environmental issues that the center will focus on will be plastic pollution, habitat conservation, storm water runoff and best management practices for homes. The center will complement the more nature oriented environmental programs offered at the Town's West Meadow Beach in Stony Brook.

"Establishing the 501(c)(3) is a giant step forward in the Town's effort to preserve the natural beauty and the ecology of Mount Sinai Harbor and the Long Island Sound," said Councilwoman Jane Bonner. "By using public and private funding, we can accomplish so much more while minimizing the economic impact on the taxpayer. I look forward to working with the directors and staff to help develop programs that will be beneficial to the environment and enhance the quality of life for the residents of the North Shore."

Emblematic of public/private benefits has been the exceptional volunteer services provided by lifelong Cedar Beach resident Randy Hagerman in saving the Marine Center building. Hagerman took the lead in refurbishing the structure he fondly recalls as a little Cape Cod, originally built by his father in 1960. Randy a professional carpenter volunteered countless, uncompensated hours in the building's renovation and remediation.

Councilwoman Bonner also established Help the Animals Fund, another Town 501(c)(3) corporation, which uses private funding to provide medical care, including needed surgery, for stray or abandoned animals. The fund also works with the Brookhaven Animal Shelter to provide shelter and to feed animals prior to making them available for adoption. For more information about Help the Animals Fund, go to www.brookhaven.org/animalshelter.

Particularly in today's challenging economic times, public/private partnerships offer an effective option for local government, as there is an ever greater need to find innovative ways to improve infrastructure that makes sense for the taxpayer.

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